

Commencement Checklist

Commencement

Aquinas College confers degrees three times per year – December, May, and August. Commencement occurs once per year in May. Commencement for the 2018-2019 academic year will be **Wednesday, May 8, 2019**.

Graduation signifies the official completion of all degree requirements.

Commencement is a ceremony. They are NOT the same thing.

Attending Commencement does not mean that you have graduated.

Before Commencement

- **Complete the Intent to Graduate Form.** The *Intent to Graduate Form* is required of all students planning to obtain a degree or acknowledgment of completion. Students must meet with their academic advisor to complete the Intent to Graduate Form at least 1-2 semesters prior to their final semester of degree completion.

Deadlines to meet with your academic advisor:

For December 2018 degree completion: March 28, 2018

For May 2019 and August 2019 degree completion: November 15, 2018

Students who fail to meet their degree requirements as planned on their *Intent To Graduate Form*, must complete a new form and will be subject to any increase of graduation fees as pertains to the newly intended graduation date.

- **Settle your student account.** Arrangements to meet all financial obligations to the College must be made before diplomas and/or transcripts will be released.
- **Order your academic regalia.** Candidates for graduation who intend to participate in Commencement are expected to wear academic regalia as distributed by the College. As Commencement is a formal ceremony, it is customary for laity to wear the academic gown over business attire and for Sisters to wear their mantels in lieu of the academic gown.

Candidates for graduation must place an order for academic regalia prior to March 15, 2019. The Academic Regalia Order Form is available on the Aquinas College website. Academic regalia will be delivered to Aquinas College and will be available for pick up at the graduation practice on Friday, May 3, 2019. Honor cords will be distributed at Commencement.

Important note: Students who do not place their order for academic regalia by the specified deadline may not be eligible to participate in Commencement.

- **Diploma.** The name to appear on the diploma is exactly as stated on the student's *Intent to Graduate Form*. Diplomas will be presented at Commencement to candidates for graduation who have completed all degree requirements, whose *Intent to Graduate Form* has been finalized in the Office of the Registrar, and who have met all financial obligations to Aquinas College. For those who do not participate in Commencement or who finish their coursework after Commencement, diplomas may be mailed or picked up in the Office of Academics per the preference indicated on the student's *Intent to Graduate Form*. Those who fail to meet their degree requirements as planned must complete a new form and will be subject to any increase of graduation fees as pertains to the newly intended completion date. *NOTE: Please contact the Office of Academics for any mailing address changes. Aquinas College cannot accept responsibility for diplomas lost in the U.S. Mail system.*
- **Commencement Practice.** Commencement Practice will be held on Friday, May 3, 2019 at Aquinas College. Candidates for graduation are expected to attend the practice, which lasts approximately one hour. Candidates will receive their academic regalia at the practice.
- **Announcements, Rings, and Diploma Frames.** You may order your announcements on-line at www.herffjones.com/college from September 12, 2016 through March 3, 2017. Click on the "Announcements" box, and then click on "Order Announcements" from the list. Orders for Aquinas College will be accessible from a drop down menu on the following page.

Announcements are not invitations; therefore, they are manufactured and shipped 10-14 days prior to Commencement. The announcements will have your name and degree printed inside. You may also order college rings on-line at www.herffjones.com/college/rings and diploma frames at www.collegiateframes.com. Choose Aquinas College from the drop down menu and follow the instructions from there. Please note that announcements, rings, and diploma frames are individual purchases and payment will be expected when placing these orders.

At Commencement

- **Arrive early at the Venue.** Both students and guests should arrive at least thirty minutes before the ceremony begins. The Assistant to the Vice President for Academics will assist candidates in lining up. The procession will begin promptly at the appointed time.
- **Wear appropriate academic attire.** All bachelor degree candidates will wear their gown, cap with tassel, and hood; plus honor cords, if provided to candidate during line up. All master degree candidates will wear their gown and cap with tassel. Master degree candidates will carry their hoods in order to be hooded during the ceremony. The academic regalia should be free of any adornments unless presented to the candidates by a College representative prior to Commencement.

- **Don't bring personal items.** Please do not bring purses or other personal items. Students are asked not to carry anything in the ceremony, with the exception of master degree candidates who will carry their hood over their right arm during the procession. There is no place to check or store purses, coats, or other personal items. Also, childcare is not provided at this ceremony. Children are not permitted to process with, recess with, nor be seated with candidates for graduation during the ceremony.
- **Follow the order of the processional.** The standard order of procession is as follows. The Bachelor of Arts candidates will lead the procession followed by the Master of Education, the Master of Arts in Teaching: Elementary, the Master of Arts in Teaching: Secondary, the Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies, the Bachelor of Science in English, and the Bachelor of Science in History degree candidates.
- **Be respectful.** Families of the candidates will be asked to stand as the candidate's name is called. In essence of time and so that each candidate's name will be clearly heard, please hold all applause until the end of the conferring of degrees.
- **Move your tassel.** At the beginning of commencement, tassels are worn on the right. Upon direction from the podium, the tassel is moved to the left.

After Commencement

- **Commencement Program.** Please be sure to take your Commencement program from your chair when you leave. It is yet another keepsake which commemorates your academic achievement.
- **Diplomas.** Candidates for graduation will receive their diplomas during the Commencement Ceremony. If the actual diploma is not in the diploma cover, the graduating student will receive their diploma in the mail after it is determined that their graduation requirements have been met. If for some reason the diploma you received is incorrect, please notify the Assistant to the Vice President for Academics immediately following the ceremony.